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||| FINANCE CAPITAL
IN
PAPAL ROBES
A Challenge

By N. BUKHARIN

Translated from the Russian by

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN

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FINANCE CAPITAL IN PAPAL ROBES

A Challenge!

By N. BUKHARIN.

(Translated from the Russian by Moissaye J. Olgin)

It is now the thirteenth year since the toiling masses of the Soviet land, with the workers vanguard in the front line, have been strenuously defending the red frontiers and building a new life. At the great divide, which the heroic proletarian army is now crossing in a terrific strain the masses of city and village are making immense sacrifices: the last pennies are being spent on the feverish, impetuous building program; unbelievable efforts are being made to lay down for future centuries the most powerful, rock-bottom foundation of the gigantic and harmonious structure of Communism: men and women, who having thrown off the power of landlords and the power of capital, prefer to suffer dire need *at present*, giving away the precious juices of their lives *today*, if only they can substitute for the antiquated, delapidated uncouth and moth-eaten technique of wooden implements a splendid metallic system of machines with which *tomorrow* it will be easier to work, with which it will be possible to produce infinitely *more*, infinitely *better*, to live a cleaner, sunnier, and more reasoned life. And just now, when the *toiling masses*, in a tremendous effort, straining all their muscles to the utmost, are modeling the heavy blocks of their present, out of which they build their future; when, notwithstanding partial failures and breaches in the front, they have moved far ahead in the all-absorbing work; just now the mad bacchanal of our enemies abroad has been let loose. Roman cardinals and Georgian counterfeiters; generals of various staffs and Popes of various gods and churches; English lords and French usurers; American moneybags and Bishops of the Anglican church; Washington Senators and Swedish dukes; professors and courtesans; police sleuths and the Holy Pope of Rome himself, the vicar of the apostles and of God, the infallible prince of the church—all of them preach a “true spiritual crusade of civilization against barbarism,” as the organ of the fascist cut-

throats, The *Popolo di Roma* sanctimoniously declares with a bestial smacking of lips. How well it becomes the fascists to assume that noble pose!

All this counter-revolutionary cancan; all this cannibalistic howl of lay and church hyenas, accompanied by the jingle of spurs, the clanking of sabres, and the tinkle of censors, is a "moral" preparation for an *attack on the U. S. S. R.* Arise against the Bolshevik land, ye princes, kings and lords! Out with the cash, ye enlightened bankers and industrialists! Prepare the dynamite, ye master of the military craft! The counterfeiters are in danger! Oil is in danger! The markets are in danger! Capitalist property is in danger! God is in danger!

Honorable ladies and honorable gentlemen! You will not frighten us with your howl. And do not blame us if we uncover before the masses of the people your real face and the brutal glint of your rapacious teeth. You do not wish to remove the very pleasant masks from your far-from pleasant faces? Then do not complain if we *tear them off* and if (where the mask has stuck) your well-cared-for skin will suffer in spots.

* * *

In commenting upon the manifesto of Holy Piots, a miserable sheet bearing the name of *Rigasche Rundschau*¹ characterizes this foolishly talkative and at the same time military document as the "long looked-for great offensive of the Catholic Church against heathen Bolshevism and Bolshevik Russia."² The offensive was started with a general attack along the whole front by this very declaration of war, although the feeble hand of the militant pontiff was moved by powers far more potent than the living archeological Roman rarity taken by itself. The most Christian father, don't you see, is deeply aggrieved over the "persecution of religion" in the U. S. S. R. He reminds us that as early as 1922, before the Genoa Conference, he proposed to all powers there represented to confront the Soviet Government with a general declaration, with an ultimatum to the effect

¹No. 33, February 10, 1930.

²Lang erwartete grosse Offensive der Katholischen Kirche gegen den heidnischen Bolschewismus und gegen bolschewistsches Russland.

that it would be recognized *only* under conditions of "respect for the conscience, the freedom of worship and the freedom of church property" ("il rispetto delle coscienze, la libertà dei culti ed dei beni della chiesa"³). Alas, the powers have not harkened to me, he mourns. They preferred the earthly to the heavenly. And now, he says, the hour of retribution has come. Assiduously picking up from the pages of the malicious yellow press the invented bloody horrors with which the newspaper scoundrels feed their philistine herds *ad nauseam*, the Pope now draws the balance sheets blessing his warriors, cursing the "persecutors of religion" and rising to veritably dizzy heights of hysterical pathos. Why shouldn't he! "The organizers of the atheist campaign and of the anti-religious front," he says, "wish first of all, to pervert the youth (*pervertier la gioventù*), using its innocence and its lack of information." Instead of educating the youth in the spirit of science and civilization, in the spirit of honesty and justice, which "cannot thrive and blossom without religion," these bandits organize the youth in godless associations spreading "moral, cultural and even economic decadence," conducting an anti-humane propaganda, infecting it with all the vices, with pernicious materialism, forcing children to report on their fathers, organizing blasphemous carnivals, compelling men and women to denounce their religion under threat of being deprived of bread cards, dwellings, and so on and so forth.

Here the Pope's fantasy makes a really divine sweep; he invents such horrors as would "make your hair stand up." The logical result of all this smeariness, the bottom line of the frightful document, is a loud appeal supposed to sound like the trumpet call of the apocalyptic archangel, the archistrategus, the warrior, the judge, who will actually "bust up" this nest of materialistic infection, this red monster of a country where there are neither kings nor princes, and where even the kulkas feel as if they were on hot coals.

Following the rules of European civilization, we shall first of all request the papal gentleman to present his documents

³Stampa, February 9, 1930.

so that his identity may be established. Your papers, monseignor, your *historical* papers?

At the fountain-head of papal magnificence, which has passed through various phases of development, there is to be found a series of dirty and rascally forgeries. Under Pope Stephanus II, King Pippin the Short, for military aid rendered by the Prince of the Church against the Lombards, gave him the "papal territory." Immediately a forged document was contrived which transformed this transaction, both commercial and bloody, into a "gift of Constantine the Great." This is as far as the *question of the origin of papal landed property* is concerned. In the middle of the ninth century a bundle of forged documents made its appearance, and was circulated with the greatest ardour, including the so-called "pseudo-Isidore's decretals." Those were collections of forged decisions which asserted that the Pope was no more nor less than the "*head of the whole world*" (*Caput totius orbis*). The brazen forgery was exposed as a forgery. In the history of the papacy, however, it is a "sacred document." This is as far as the question of the *historical passport* of the papal gentleman is concerned.

Thus, at the very origin of papal existence, there is blood and filth, war and forgery, which cast their lurid light over all the subsequent development of this black institution.

The papacy, whose herald is the most reverend warrior of the Holy See, possesses not only timely documents pulsating with *current problems*. The holy fathers have also created for themselves an all-embracing scholastic *theory*, whose rust-eaten iron hoops cramp the unhappy brains of all servitors of the Catholic Church. This theory was formulated as early as the end of the thirteenth century by the famous Thomas Aquinas, who wrote the "*Encyclopedia of Theology*" ("*Summa theologiae*"). Even in the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, dated August 4th, 1879, the study of Thomas Aquinas was demanded *as a duty* of the servitors of the Church. This is the most fully elaborated theoretical *program* of papacy. What, then, do we find in this learned encyclopedia on the subject of tolerance, freedom of conscience and other lovely things which the now living Pius boasts? "*Heresy is a sin for which the guilty one must not only be excommunicated from the church, but also clim-*

inated from this world by death." This is the chief commandment of papacy. Of course, the arms of the popes have now been shortened; their former grandeur has petered out; their peacock's train has been plucked by old Dame History quite considerably. But when this dried-up vampire again tries to spread its talons, when it leans on the still powerful forces of the imperialist murders; when it puts on the appearance of tolerance, we must recall its executionist commandment: a heretic (*i. e.* he who is not a slave of the Pope) must be "*eliminated from this world by death!*"

Here, as elsewhere, the "deed" preceded the "word." It seems that the memory of Pope Pius XI becomes conveniently blank when dealing with the "theory and practice" of the Holy See itself. Only a sanctimonious liar, shot through with hypocrisy from the top of his head to the tips of his toes, can step forth with at once oily and slanderous missives like the latest production of the Pope when he, himself, drags behind his back a burden of monstrous crimes: all this crunching of bones, moaning of the agonized, odor of burning human flesh, stench and smoke of the pyres, groans of the tortured, they will cry to heaven *for ever and ever!* They will not escape the implacable historic judgment—all these Popes, with their inquisition, their Jesuits, their "crusades," the savage mass extermination of the "heretics," their greed, perversity, venality, intrigues—no, *they will not escape!*

Your princely holiness! Won't you please recall the decision of your *Rheims Council* of 1157, when, following the "most humane," "most tolerant," "most Christian" rule, with all due "respect to freedom of conscience," the faces of the heretics were to be branded *with hot irons*? Won't you please recall a similar decision of your most holy Council of *Oxford* of 1166? Won't you recall the decisions of the *Lateran Council* of 1178, when a "crusade" was proclaimed (in 1181) against all the "enemies of the church" and when the papal beast absolved the people of all sins for two years to come for the mass extermination of the "heretics"? Won't you recall the so-called "Etablissements" of Ludwig the Holy (1270) with the proviso condemning "heretics" *to be burned alive*? Won't you recall the legislation of King Frederick II (Edicts of 1220-1239) based on the

decisions of the Lateran Council, a legislation which outlawed the heretics, which condemned all "accomplices," "defenders" and "interceders" to life-long exile, and which subjected their property to confiscation and their houses to barbarous destruction? Won't you recall the decision of the *Narbonne* Council of 1229, and of the *Albi* Council, according to which all boys above fourteen and all girls above twelve were obliged to inform on each and every one. (It is from here, holy Father, that your slanderous lies about the Soviet land and our youth spring!) Won't you recall, you hypocritical old fellow, the decisions of the *Narbonne* Council of 1244, according to which a lay judge, delaying the execution of a heretic, was himself liable to execution? Won't you recall the decision of the *Constance* Council (1418), which burned John Huss and which decided to "punish with fire," i.e. to burn at the stake, all the Hussites ("*puniantur ad ignem*")?

The Catholic Church traversed the length and breadth of almost all of Europe with fire and sword. It, moreover, spread its tentacles over the whole world; it swept like a swarm of voracious locusts, like an instigator of colonial bestialities, like a veritable murderer of peoples, the more hideous because it covered up the bloody orgies of trading capital with the words "love and mercy." Why such malicious militancy? The explanation is very simple. The most holy fathers fought with fire and sword against the "heresy" because—to use the expression of a very moderate and very well-meaning historian of the Inquisition, not a Bolshevik by any means, but a virtuous American book-seller, Henry Charles Lea—"the *ruling classes*, with a few insignificant exceptions, took almost no part in the origin of heresy."⁴ The heretics came from the lower strata of the population; from among the peasants, the artisans, the journeymen, the poor. The best, most courageous, and most noble representatives of these strata sometimes almost touched upon Communist ideas; they went bravely to the stake, and their heroic death will always shine as a bright torch for true, real humanity. On the other hand, the papal

⁴Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*. Quotation re-translated from Russian.

jackals, from the petty servants of the Inquisition, the spies, the handy men, the informers, the "*bravi*," to the "great Inquisitors" and "generals" of the Jesuit order, the bishops and the popes themselves, will remain in the hearts of humanity as a hideous remembrance of the bestiality of historic barbarism. It is not in vain that one of the largest "heretic" sects was called "Cathars" ("the pure ones"), "good people" ("*boni homines*"), whereas the papal sleuths of all ranks were called "Cazzagazzari" ("hunters after the Cathars").

The "*holy Inquisition*," this powerful instrument in the hands of the popes, whose very name has become a hateful word of abuse, developed an elaborate system of moral and physical torture: "trial by water," the rack, the quartering, the burning at the stake (*auto da fe*); the encircling of the victim's neck with a bag of powder (technical perfection after the invention of powder), *i. e.* the combination of the stake and the explosion; the iron, steel and wooden contraptions required for this purpose—what a gloomy and bloody depravity breathes from all these pious deeds of the humble fathers of the Church! And now the Pope steps forth as a fighter for the "freedom of conscience." Now he sheds crocodile tears over the non-existent atrocities in "Russia," while every stone of the Roman pavements, the fields and the cities of France, Spain, Italy, Germany and a series of other places are saturated with the blood that was shed by the popes, blackened by the smoke of the pyres and submerged in the moral stupor created by the poisonous vapors of the Catholic Church! Without blushing to the very roots of his hair, the Pope dares to defend "culture and civilization," to defend science—he, the commander and the pontiff of an organization that burned Giordano Bruno at the stake, that tortured Campanella to death, that put the great Galileo behind iron bars, that throttled everything and everybody standing in the way of Roman domination!

The *Jesuit order*, this select cohort of the "militant church" ("ecclesiae militantis"), was, after the Inquisition, the most important instrument of papal policy. It crept in everywhere, from the government to the schools. At one time it spread its behind-the-scenes power over all the countries of the world. But hasn't the very *name* "Jesuit"

become a word of shame, an abusive appellation, a *despised name*? A historian of Jesuitism, a man quite benevolently disposed towards it, Mr. H. Boehmer, discloses the social essence of the order when he says: "Its ranks begin to be filled almost exclusively with representatives of the aristocracy of power, wealth and education; it is natural that among those select (N. B.!) elements of society the order finds its main support. . . . The people do not want it anywhere, although, wherever the order has already rooted itself, they easily allow themselves to be kept in swaddling clothes."⁵ These "swaddling clothes" were often of such a nature that the sons of the people were lifted to the ceiling on pulleys, with limbs pulled apart; the "select elements of society," the "aristocracy of power, wealth and education," know how to deal with the "mob"! But while the "Society of Jesus," in its relations to the "outside world," was marching hand in hand with the "most holy Inquisition," marking the limits of its religious tolerance by burning the "heretics" at the stake, it developed at the hands of its theoreticians, in the first place its founder, *Ignatius Loyola*, a peculiar theory of internal relations. These theoreticians elevated the *very ideology of prostitution and unprincipled servility to the heights of an ideological principle*. They built up an organization whose members considered the repudiation of their own principles as their highest virtue and their, so to speak, moral duty. It has been correctly said that there isn't a meanness in the world which would not find for itself an ideological justification. The king of the Jesuits, Loyola, developed a whole theory of subordination, of "cadaver discipline"; every member of the order was supposed to obey his superior "*like a corpse which could be turned in all directions*," like a stick which follows every movement, like a ball of wax which could be changed and extended in all directions." . . . This corpse is characterized by three degrees of perfection: subordination by action, subordination of the will, subordination of the intellect. When the last degree is reached, when the man sub-

⁵H. Boehmer, *The Jesuits*, p. 163 Russian edition of 1913 (There is a "revised" English translation published by the Castle Press in Philadelphia (1928) from which the above sentence was omitted.—Translator.

stitutes naked subordination for intellect, renouncing all his convictions; then you have a hundred per cent Jesuit. This universal "cadaverization," as the organizational and ideological principle of the order, brought about a situation where even the Jesuits themselves began to revolt. By the end of the sixteenth century, one of the theoreticians of this revolt, Padre Juan Mariana, had the following to say in his book, *On the Ailments of the Society of Jesus*, about the internal situation of the order: "The monarchy (meaning the monarchy inside the order N. B.) destroys us, not because it is a monarchy, but because it is not sufficiently limited. It is a *mad boar* which devastates everything in its way." None the less, the "mad boar" continued its devastating work, for, with few exceptions, there was sitting on the papal throne another "mad boar" with fangs even larger than those of the "*praepositus generalis*" of the Jesuit order! No wonder that, under the rule of such "unprincipled principles," deception, trickery, fraud, use of dagger, poison, perfidy, the refined system of lies called casuistry, sadistic tortures at hearings, double-dealing — all these and many other things, blossomed luxuriantly in the vineyards of the Lord.

This spiritual prostitution, this ideology of perfidious castratoes and homosexualists, this *filth*, you, holy Pius, call "culture and civilization"?

It is the Bolsheviks, don't you see, who demoralized the youth when they fight the idea that wine is transformed into God's blood to be sipped from golden bowls after one has tasted of God's flesh, obtained in like manner from bread.

It is the Bolsheviks who fight against science when they, instead of the mysteries of the transformation of bread and wine into blood and flesh, insist on the periodical system of Mendeleyev or the theory of electrons.

And it is, apparently, the Roman popes and inquisitors who are very much concerned about science when they burn the Brunos.

It is the Bolsheviks who demoralize the youth when they rouse it to fight against medieval superstition. And it is the Roman popes and the Jesuits who "educate" the youth through general *cadaverization* and the doctrine of the *infallibility* of the Roman dalai-lamas. Isn't it so, beatific old

fellow? Isn't it so, oh, ye mummy on the throne, ye dry rot of our time, still infecting the world with your stinking poisonous breath?

The Bolsheviks inflict vices upon the youth! Their chief "vice" is *materialism*, while honesty and justice cannot thrive without religion. This is how the papal encyclical runs. We have already seen what the "honesty" and "justice" of the papal Curia is worth. But it is not good for Pius to mention vices. For history cannot record a "story" more full of vice than the "story" of the respected Roman shepherds. Here, too, gentleman accuser, you will be *paid back a hundred-fold!*

We shall start our journey through this realm with a few general ideas advanced by papal *theory*. We thus encounter the theory of the "treasury of good deeds" ("thesaurus bonorum operum") of Christ and his saints. A truly charming theory, indeed. Christ and his saints have accumulated a heap of good deeds the key to which is in the hands of the Pope. The Pope, it appears, is in possession of a perpetual current account: he values the sum total of the "good deeds" in gold and balances them with the sins of the flock, also valued in gold but with the minus sign. If the sinner wishes to cancel his sins, he pays the Pope a fee of so and so many ducats, and for this price the Pope dispenses from the "treasury" a corresponding amount of good deeds which cancel the culprit's sins. This commercial transaction, where the good deeds of Christ are being weighed on the scales of an avaricious usurer, and where the Pope plays the part of an enterprising dealer, expressed itself in the widespread practice of the so-called *indulgences*—documents absolving sins. The Pope's clerks and agents trade in these documents. Central and local offices, traveling agents, hideous commercial dealings, robberies, indulgences of the second order, forged indulgences, speculation—isn't this one of the most outrageous of all outrageous pictures? And isn't this the work of the *filthy* papal hands? Christ's deeds were being sold. The rich bought themselves free of sins. Bishops' posts were being sold. Even the "mysteries," the most mystical, the most "holy" in the Christian cult, were being sold. Are you not acquainted, oh holy man, with the institution of "*oblato*," a fee without which the believer at

one time could have no communion? Are you not acquainted with the expression of *Peter Cantor*, who said that the priests were worse than Judas Iscariot, who sold Christ's body for thirty pieces of silver, for, as he said: "They sell him thirty times a day . . . for one silver piece"? Are you not acquainted with the simony? Have you forgotten about the neptism, the practice of appointing as bishops the pope's relatives, depraved and perverted youngsters, the laughing stock of the streets, appointed only because they were the objects of the pope's licentious desires? Do you not know that it was *papal Rome* which was the breeding ground of prostitution and that, to cite one instance, the 1490 statistics, counted among one hundred thousand inhabitants of the city something like seven thousand "*puellae publicae*" ("public girls")? Wasn't it in papal *Avignon* that the *courtesan*, the type of the refined court prostitute, made her appearance? Wasn't it the papal court in Avignon that was spoken of as having "*academies des femmes amiables*" ("academies of lovable women"), of women whose names are known to historians? Do you not know the hired cocottes, who administered to the refined needs of the Popes, Sixtus IV, Alexander VI and Leo X? Was it not the holy father Paulus II (1464-1471) who introduced the *bacchanal* as a papal court custom? Have you not heard anything about the famous *Lateran carnival* of Pope Leo X on April 11th, 1513, when one day only, cost one hundred thousand ducats, when all self-indulgence, all arts, all pleasures, all vices, all sensuality, all luxury, were mobilized for the *holy* (ha, ha, ha!) prince of the church?⁶ Has anybody repudiated the fiery lines of the famous contemporary, the humanist, *Ulrich von Hutten*, who wrote in his "*Vadiscus, or the Roman Trinity*":

"*Vadiscus* added: Three things are often to be met with in Rome: sensuous pleasures, luxurious raiments, and hauteur.

"*Ernhold*: Yes! All these things are in vogue there. In Rome, however, they not only indulge in sensuous pleasures, but they also strive to vary them, to invent unusual, even monstrous, ways of attaining pleasure, so that the ancient *spintriae* are nothing in comparison with them. As a matter

⁶Werner Lombart, *Luxus und Kapitalismus*.

of fact, they look with contempt on the simple, sensuous pleasures, calling them *peasant-like* and *crude*. This is why there are pleasures in Rome *of which we are ashamed to speak.*

" . . . Vadiscus says: This is why three things are in great abundance in Rome: antiques, poison, and ruins. To which I [i. e. Hutten, N. B.] added: Three things have been banished from there: simplicity, moderation, and chastity. [There followed triads: Three things are being dealt with in Rome: Christ, priest's positions, and women. . . . Three things have a particularly high value in Rome: woman's beauty, excellent horses, and papal indulgences]."⁷

Hutten then adds: "There are three things the idle in Rome occupy themselves with: walks, fornication, and feasts.

"Ernhold: Indeed, they do nothing else there. For those who are not idle, those who plan, write, flatter, aspire, plead, are busy deceiving, lying, perjuring themselves, betraying, robbing, stealing, adulterating, seducing."⁸

And then especially about the *popes themselves*:

"If they [the popes, N. B.] murder the soul, how can they be called the vicars of Christ? Wherein do their institutions appear similar to the institutions of Christ? He once said, turning to Peter: 'Shepherd my lambs,' and what do the popes do? Do they not reduce to starvation the Christians who are *exhausted by papal robbery?* Do they not skin them? When they shear their flock, do they not cut them to the flesh?"⁹

And finally, here is a *general characteristic of the papal church*:

This church no doubt consists of thieves, sacrilegists, deceivers, notaries, bishops guilty of simony, and of those flattering the Roman high priest—it consists of such only. They [the popes N. B.] do not refuse lay power the way Peter did, but they wage land and sea wars for kingdoms

⁷Ulrich von Hutten, Collected Works (in German and Latin), Leipsic, 1925, Vol. V, Vadisens oder die romische Dreifaltigkeit, pp. 316 ff.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

and power, arousing the subjects against their rulers, shedding blood and poisoning the people.¹⁰

Such is the *real*, the actual face of the Holy See. But this picture is far from enumerating all the features of the moral and political physiognomy of papacy.

The popes were, first of all, greedy and bloody conquerors, who shrank before no means for crushing their enemies and half-friends. *The history of papacy is the history of endless wars*, conspiracies, diplomatic deceptions, perfidious treacheries, secret murders, numberless pillaging expeditions. This feudal baron, prince, emperor, strove incessantly to enlarge his lands; the "holy slogans" of fighting for the Christian faith, fighting against heresies, fighting for the word of truth, etc., etc., were only an ugly shield hiding very prosaic aims. The growing demands of the popes, the reaching out of their grabbing hands, was accompanied by a simultaneous creation of ever new theories which claimed, "in true Christian spirit," ever greater degrees of power for the Roman pontiff. The fight against heresy was accompanied by confiscations . . . in favor of the *pope*. The fight against the "enemy of the church" generally rounded out the *pope's* possessions. The fights against the princes who fretted under the unusual avarice of the Holy See, extended the landed possessions of the *pope* in case of victory. The fight for the "holy land," the fight for colonies (under the slogan of fighting for the Christian faith) widened the taxing area of the *pope*. All this was made law by the theory of the specifically privileged position of the Roman pontiff. Pillaging, war, banditry, were smeared with the rich ointment of heavenly bliss, which feat could be easily accomplished in view of the fact that the keys to the little chest containing that bliss was in the hands of the same holy father.

Already *Gregorius VII* (1073-1085) advanced the thesis that the pope is the ruler of the whole world. He also put that thesis into practice by compelling Henry IV after he had been excommunicated, to travel to Canossa to have his sins absolved. *Innocentius III* (1198-1216) concretized the thesis of *Gregorius VII* by putting the idea of papal greed for power into a formula saying that the lay kings were

¹⁰*Ibid.*

papal vassals, whereas the pope, while not above our Lord Jesus Christ, was certainly above all the human race. *Bonifacius VIII* declared that the pope must hold in his hands not only the spiritual but also the *worldly* sword, i. e. he elevated war, as a method of Christian influence, to the height of a "principle." If Pope Innocentius III had asserted that the election of an emperor must depend "*principialiter et finaliter*" ("in principle and as a matter of finality") upon the Roman Curia, the pope at the Trent Council (1563) was placed *above the world councils*, and on July 18th, 1870, on the eve of the Paris Commune, at the threshold of the twentieth century, during the triumphal march of natural sciences, the dogma of the popes' *infallibility* was advanced! True, this "dogma" was accepted at a time when the tenacious hands of the pope had already been three-quarters chopped off, but how characteristic are these *greedy desires* of the old fellows! It must be remembered that they, the God anointed, turn into *beasts* as soon as the historic situation allows them to let out their talons. . . . Archbishop Peter of Blois (13th century) described the archbishop's judges as vipers "exceeding snakes and basilisks in malice." Hildeber of Manassa (cf. Lea, *l. c.*) declared about the papal dignitaries: "They comprehended like a stone; they judged like a log; they ignited like fires; they are shrewd like a fox; they are proud like an ox; they are voracious like a minotaur."

Greedy, exceedingly ambitious and vain, the popes fought incessant wars not only against the "foreign" enemies and not only against the "heretics," but also against their own vassals, the bishops. Moreover, there were periods in history when several popes fought each other with the utmost cruelty, with fire and sword. Thus, by the end of the fourteenth century, there was elected in Rome one holy father, Urbanus VI, while in Avignon another by the name of Clement VI was elected; after this the institution of the one and only successor of Peter continued to exist in a split form. In 1409 the Pisa Council deposed both popes, Gregorius XII and Benedictus XIII, and elected a third, Alexander V, whose successor was Joannes XXIII. The Constantine Council deposed *all three popes* and elected Martinus V. The hideous squabbles, the monstrous pacts

behind the scenes, led to a situation where once a clever woman became pope.

There were among the popes not only plain criminals; there were past masters of filthy and bloody action; there were virtuosos of murdering from the ambush, virtuosos of perfidy and crime. Sixtus IV (1471-1484) deceived his allies, participated in secret murders, incited to wars, excommunicated and executed enemies, persecuting them with a furious malice. Later his successor, Alexander IV, and then Alexander's son, Cæsar Borgia, made everybody tremble. He was, according to the historian of papacy, Ranke, "given up to his passions and deeply stained with blood." How Rome did tremble at his name! Cæsar required gold and possessed enemies: everynight the corpses of murdered men were found in the streets, yet, none dared to move; for who but might fear that his own turn would be next? Those whom violence could not reach were taken off by poison."¹¹ "On the death of distinguished men, people instantly suspected poisoning by the Pope."¹² Cæsar Borgia killed his brother and drowned the corpse in the Tiber. He killed his brother-in-law; he killed the favorite of his father who hid behind his cloak—he cut his throat before the eyes of Alexander. There is no crime where Cæsar Borgia did not leave record-breaking figures.

And this monster, this beast worthy only of being put into an iron cage and exhibited in cities and towns as a cruel and malicious animal, is counted among the ranks of the glorious predecessors of Pius XI!

Depraved and sensuous debauchees; sadistic murderers like Cæsar Borgia; wily hunters after power like Sixtus IV; refined *bon vivants* to whom strangulation and robbery were only a pedestal for unheard of luxury in the most bizarre forms—like Leo X—these were the men who determined the *moral* (*moral!*) physiognomy of the papacy. And now, pious Pius himself teaches us moral lessons, *he* appears as a defender of morality alleged to be trampled upon by the Bolsheviks. . . .

Yes, we trample upon the "morality" of the pope! Our

¹¹ Leopold von Ranke, *History of the Popes*, Vol. I, p. 37.

¹² *Ibid.*

youth, in the first place its proletarian battalions, will do everything possible in order that the earth may *never* and *nowhere* produce such poisonously monstrous outcasts of mankind as the Sixtuses, the Leos, the Cæsars and the Alexanders. The "morality" of crude strangulators, the "morality" of sadists, the "morality" of the Jesuits, the "morality" of the erotomaniacs who invented the adoration of the "Virgin Mary," the "morality" of hangmen, strangulators of science, the "morality" of the filthy casuists, of the greedy usurers—oh, thrice cursed be that "morality"!

This is the "morality" of slave-holders enraged to the point of fury; it is the "morality" of "infuriated store-keepers" who would shrink before nothing in defense of their "own" (stolen) possessions, in defense of the old world, which is "oozing blood and filth" from every pore; it is the morality of those who would attack everything new, rob the oppressed, persecute and cruelly smother all the living forces of mankind.

They have played a big game, the papal gentlemen: *a world game!* Their agents, their Jesuit fathers, their missionaries, their emissaries, roamed everywhere: they accompanied the robbing expeditions of the Spanish and Portuguese bandits in America and India; they penetrated Africa, China, preparing colonial enslavement; they utilized every possible method; they directly participated in the slaughter; they burned and killed whole settlements of the "heathen"; they pretended to be semi-"heathen" themselves (for instance, Brahmins in India) in order to creep into the confidence of people of different faiths (the dispute over the so-called "Chinese" and "Malabar" customs); they lied and simulated; they organized "crusades" and commercial expeditions, bringing back with them hatred of the natives and syphilis, from which several popes were among the first to rot.

From the notes of an agent of the world famous German firm of the Welsers, in Augsburg, one by the name of Baltasar Sprenger, who participated in the Portuguese expedition of Almeda (1505), we have a colorful description of the functional role of Christianity:

"On August 13th we arrived at the harbor of Mombassa . . . the natives were hostile to us . . . but *with the aid of*

Christ our Saviour . . . we drove them out of their fort and to the very city . . . With God's help, quite a number of the heathens perished, while on our side only two were killed. . . . We began to introduce order and to prepare for plunder (*als wir nur unser ordenung in der stat geschickt und uns zu plendern gerust hatten*) . . . we first placed guards and watchmen and then we began to plunder and we found great wealth which it is not possible to enumerate. *Eternal gratitude, honor and worship to God!* . . . All together we had ten boats when we captured the city; the eleventh boat arrived later in a deplorable state. The name of this boat was "Raphael." Generally speaking, the German merchants had three boats: "*Saint Hieronimus*," "*Saint Raphael*" and "*Saint Leongard*"—and all of them participated in all the expeditions and battles" (emphasis ours. N. B.).

Here is an excerpt from a note by Hans Mayer, written in Portuguese about a battle with the Moors:

"The doors were locked; we broke them in, but the whole place proved empty. . . . The entire city was occupied without any resistance. . . . The Franciscans erected a cross while the Admiral occupied a house next to this cross. As to the crew, it busied itself with plundering (*se meteo a roubar*) the goods and stores of this rich city."

The seas of blood shed by the "most humble" Roman popes are immense. The Pope wishes now to place one more predatory gem in his tiara; he blows the horn and calls for a new crusade. But it is not good for him to shout about morals. The morals of the popes are monstrous. It is not good for him to shout about science. The popes are the strangulators of science. It is not good for him to shout about "peoples." The popes are the hangmen of peoples. At the threshold of the twentieth century, one of the nearest predecessors of the present pope, Pius IX, in his famous encyclical of December, 1864, took a decisive stand against the "errors of this age"; he thundered and stormed against placing reason above revelation, he cursed the opinion that the *will of the people is the highest law*; he asserted that those outside of the flock that is shepherded by the pope, *cannot hope for "salvation."* He thundered against every kind of democracy; he revealed himself such an advocate of darkness; such an obscurantist, such a partisan of the

Black Hundred, such a retrograd, such a hangman of thought, reason and science that even Thiers, in his *Discourses on the Roman Question* ("Discours sur la question Romaine") declared that he was "sorry" that the encyclical had been issued. And now another pope by the name of Pius dares step forth in defense of science! You are not yet satisfied, papal gentlemen, with the rows of corpses which press on your conscience! You are not satisfied with your "infallible" declarations, encyclicals, bulls, in which you appeal against the "presumption of reason" and for "revelation," i. e. for the ancient fables and old myths, corrected and augmented by the falsifiers from among the papal clientele! We shall be against you and for science: *for the multiplication table as against the doctrine of the trinity; for chemistry as against the doctrine of the holy communion; for biology as against the myths of the immaculate conception; for Darwinism as against the silly story about Eve created from Adam's rib, for the recognition of your perversions as against the doctrine of your infallibility; for truth as against papal deception; for the working class of the whole world as against capitalist slavery, and against the defender of this slavery, the pope.* Your threats are empty incitements. The world-historic line of development lies on our side.

It is a highly characteristic fact that there was a time when Pius XI moderated his anti-Bolshevik passions. The secret of it was not so long ago revealed by a "civilized" secret service man of the German General Staff, the well-known journalist and contributor to the *Berliner Tageblatt*, Mr. Paul Schaefer:

"The form of the Greek Orthodox Church," he says, "was shattered by the 1917 Revolution. Had not the moment arrived when the two great Christian communities, after a thousand years old schism, could be reunited, since one of them had apparently remained without leadership? . . . The hope that the road to the Soviet State would prove free, must be considered as the prime motive for the tolerant and patient attitude of Pius XI towards the Bolshevik regime. Now this hope is apparently dead and buried while the Soviet State exists."

Hence the papal offensive.¹³

But even this is not the whole story.

The papal power, in its development, has passed through many phases. Being a feudal organization, it amalgamated with trading capital; it kept the closest friendship with the largest trading firms of the world, like the famous house of the Fuggers. It participated, directly and indirectly, in the piratical colonial expeditions for trade purposes; the Catholic priestly robe, together with the Catholic cross, accompanied the notorious killers and desperadoes of trading capital in their expeditions and bloody adventures beyond the seas. Papal power took a stand against the French revolution and its repercussions, but Napoleon Bonaparte, who cared little about God, made short shrift of Pope Pius VII, arresting him, imprisoning him, forcing him to sign concordats according to which everything was radically changed; the Government, spitting in the face of the popes, appointed bishops at its own discretion. Changes in the historical process reflected themselves more than once upon the destinies of the popes. Sometimes they had a very narrow escape, as was the case with Pope Pius IX, who shamefully ran away from his Godly possessions in 1848. After the period of revolution had passed, however, he returned to his hearth, and the papal throne once more became a support for the general European reaction. With the growth of the labor movement, the Pope openly raised the banner of struggle against Socialism and Communism, of struggle against the revolutionary labor movement, thus earning more and more the recognition of the bourgeoisie. As early as 1846 (in the encyclical, *Qui pluribus*) Pope Pius IX hurled himself against the Communists, at the same time attacking other "secret societies." In the encyclical of 1864 (*Quanta cura*) the pope again declared war against Communism, and in the so-called *Syllabus* he cursed it as a *pest*. Leo XIII, in the encyclical of December 28, 1878, which is especially devoted to "modern errors," sharply attacks "Socialism, Communism and nihilism," defending with every possible means the sacred property rights of the capitalists and land-

¹³*Berliner Tageblatt*, 1930, No. 76.

owners. Papacy thus becomes one of the fundamental forces which the bourgeoisie advances against the proletariat. In recent times the organization of the Catholic Church has amalgamated with the organizations of finance capital. The popes have long possessed banking houses, estates, industrial enterprises. Today, even in Protestant Germany, the heavy industry and the banks are intimately connected with the Vatican. In Italy itself, the papacy is a large share-holder in banks, and secretly maintains a number of institutions, including cinemas. The Vatican knows what it is doing. There was a time when it counteracted in every possible way the national unification of Italy and was directly at war against the national revolutionary battalions of Garibaldi. Today it has formed a bloc with Mussolini, who for the greater glory of national counter-revolution is ready to reduce the working class to the role of working cattle housed in a not-very-well-appointed stable. The union of the Holy See with the fascist clique, this revolutionary, aggressive, thoroughly anti-proletarian and militant counter-revolution serves as a splendid shining symbol of the fact that the pontiff and supreme ruler of the Catholic Church has become the chief fighter in the forefront of *world counter-revolution*.

The banner of the pope is the banner of capitalist counter-revolution, the banner of oppressing the workers and the poor of all countries, the banner of war against the workers and peasants of the USSR, the banner of new bloody battles in the name of capital.

The people of the Union are molding one-sixth of the earth's surface in a new way. They have raised with a daring hand the banner of great work, great rebuilding of our country. They have firmly decided, with the proletariat at their head and under the leadership of its Party, to rebuild their technique and their economy, their every-day life and their science, to create a new sunlit life. They have overthrown the landowners and the capitalists. They have overthrown the Whites and the interventionists. They have wiped out epidemics and famine. They are marching ahead against the old forms of economy. They are nurturing a new socialist industry, and they radically reorganize the life of the village. They throw off their shoulders the ages-old superstitions; out of the stuffy holes of superstition, witch-

ery and quackery they step forth to the broad path of building a new socialist society where there shall be neither capitalists nor exploitation, neither popes nor priests! *This is why* the popes prepare a new crusade. *This is why* the entire camp of slave-holders and ruling sharpers, speculators and traders in human blood is astir.

For this very reason the great armies of the workers of all countries, the international army of defenders of the proletarian dictatorship, will take the stand against the armies of capital and its papal Jesuits.

For this very reason the reactionary appeal of the Pope and his archbishops calling for a crusade against the USSR will be met with a revolutionary appeal of the workers of all countries: Down with Capitalism! Down with the Pope and all his archbishops!

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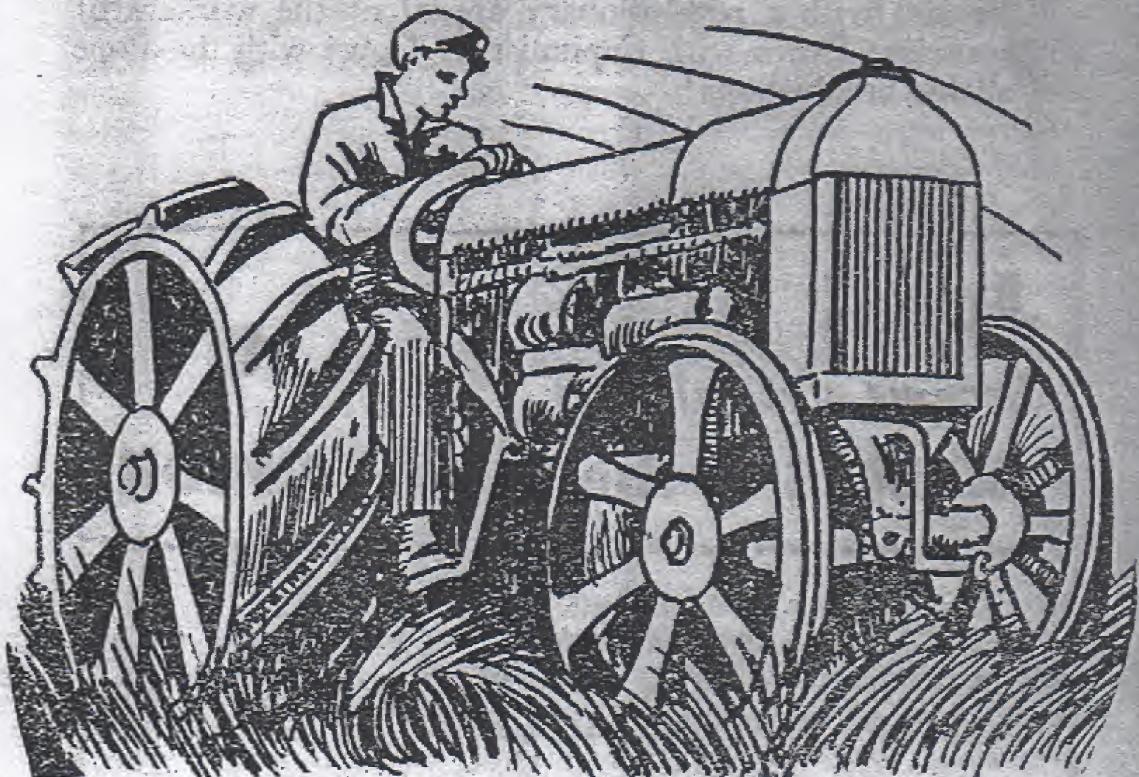
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